

Beavers in the Forest of Dean: Green deputy leader claims “green triumph”



Green Party

8 December 2017

Green Party deputy leader Amelia Womack has claimed a “green triumph” after the Environment Secretary Michael Gove confirmed that beavers will be introduced to the Forest of Dean.

The idea was championed by Green Party councillor Sid Phelps and has been warmly received by the local community [1]. It is hoped that by introducing beavers, the council will enhance the biodiversity of the Forest of Dean and improve the area’s resilience to floods. Their activities regulate water flow which minimises the risks of both flooding and drought.

Womack said:

“This is wonderful news and I am proud to claim this as a Green triumph. Sid made the introduction of beavers to the Forest of Dean a major part of his campaign for election and it is so exciting to see his efforts bearing fruit so soon after he became a councillor. This just shows the difference a Green councillor can make.

“In the last few weeks I’ve been travelling the country, visiting innovative projects that are proving flood management does not need to be all about building concrete walls – it could and should be about enhancing, fortifying, and strengthening the green spaces around us. The lessons I have learned are being so clearly put into practice. Well done Sid and well done everyone involved in this project.”

In the last few months Amelia Womack has visited Devon, Stroud, and Yorkshire as part of a series of visits to learn about modern alternatives to flood management. She saw the beaver reintroduction project in Devon and has invited Michael Gove to visit the project with her, hoping that he will take up the concept of “rewilding” as a way to protect the environment.

Notes:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/sep/16/beavers-uk-flood-defences-forest-of-dean>

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[Green MEP and QC launch judicial review proceedings against government](#)



Green Party

7 December 2017

Green MEP Molly Scott Cato and Jolyon Maugham QC of the Good Law Society have today applied for judicial review in the High Court over the Government's refusal to release sectoral studies carried out by DExEU into the impacts of Brexit, and a Treasury study into the effects of leaving the customs union. The application comes a day after Brexit secretary David Davis told the Committee for Leaving the EU that impact studies do not exist [1]. However, for months the government has said sectoral studies do exist [2] and independent experts have asserted specific knowledge of the content of the Treasury study.

Scott Cato said:

"The country has run out of patience with the bluff and bluster of some of our senior Government representatives. We need the cold, clean scalpel of the law to separate fact from fiction and establish exactly what studies have been carried out – and to make them available for us all to see. Mr Davis will now have to explain himself in front of a High Court judge.

"For eight months I have been seeking release of these studies to inform myself and those I represent about the potential impacts of Brexit on our economy. It is frankly astonishing to hear the Brexit secretary now proclaim that these studies, which he has fought so hard to keep hidden from us all, do not in fact exist.

"Withholding information and keeping us all in the dark is a serious dereliction of duty for the man tasked with negotiating a change of such

potentially devastating consequences.”

Jolyon Maugham QC said:

“Let him throw his smoke bombs. David Davis can’t escape from one simple principle: a Government of the people should never hide from the people what it plans to do to the people.”

Notes:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/dec/06/sector-by-sector-brexit-impact-forecasts-do-not-exist-says-david-davis>

2. <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/staggers/2017/12/many-times-david-davis-talked-about-brexit-analysis-he-says-doesn-t-exist>

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[Caroline Lucas: Government energy policy is a mess](#)



Green Party

7 December 2017

***Lucas: New nuclear is ‘eye-wateringly expensive’**

Caroline Lucas, the co-leader of the Green Party, has responded to the Government’s announcement on new nuclear. Ministers have said they will be pushing ahead with both large and small nuclear reactors. In an announcement today [1] the Government has committed further resources to nuclear research, and in a consultation paper [2] listed the proposed sites for larger nuclear power stations.

The proposed sites are Sellafield, Sizewell, Bradwell, Oldbury, Hartlepool and Heysham.

Caroline Lucas, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

“The Government’s energy policy is a mess. Ministers are ploughing huge sums of money into supporting overpriced nuclear, while retaining a defacto ban on onshore wind and failing to give solar the support the sector needs. They’re sending mixed messages to investors when we desperately need clarity to show that the Government is serious about creating a renewables-based low carbon Britain

“This island nation should be producing its energy from cheaper, renewable clean sources – not diverting even more resources towards new nuclear which is both eye-wateringly expensive and far too slow to get online.”

Notes:

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-support-development-of-next-generation-nuclear-technology>
2. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664925/FINAL_NPS_siting_consultation_document.pdf

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[Green MEP responds to David Davis claims that Brexit impact studies do not exist](#)



Green Party

6 December 2017

Responding to this morning’s evidence session of the DExEU committee and David Davis’s comment that the Brexit impact studies do not in fact exist [1], Molly Scott Cato, and MEP who is about to launch judicial review proceedings to force the publication of the studies [2], said:

“I have been seeking to know the content of these studies since April and in September Brexit minister Steve Baker responded to my letter demanding release explicitly on behalf of the Secretary of State and acknowledging that the Department had ‘conducted analysis of over 50 sectors of the economy’ [3]. Now David Davis claims these studies do not in fact exist.

“There are two possibilities. Either the studies do exist, and Davis has lied to the House and must resign. Or the studies do not exist, in which case Davis is guilty of dereliction of duty and must resign. Either way, he cannot maintain the confidence of the House as our Brexit negotiator.

“Together with Jolyon Maugham QC of the Good Law Project I expect to be in a position to launch judicial review proceedings to force the publication of the studies tomorrow. This will give Davis or his representative the opportunity to clarify on oath whether the studies do in fact exist or not.”

Notes:

1. [https://www.theguardian.com/politics/blog/live/2017/dec/06/david-davis-questi-
oned-by-brexit-committee-about-impact-assessments-politics-live](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/blog/live/2017/dec/06/david-davis-questi-
oned-by-brexit-committee-about-impact-assessments-politics-live)
2. [http://mollymep.org.uk/2017/11/07/court-action-still-looms-brexit-impact-s-
tudies/](http://mollymep.org.uk/2017/11/07/court-action-still-looms-brexit-impact-s-
tudies/)
3. [http://mollymep.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/SteveBaker_50studies-08.09.17.pd-
f](http://mollymep.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/SteveBaker_50studies-08.09.17.pd-
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[Greens: Leeds council air pollution plans “woefully inadequate”](#)



Green Party

Leeds Green Party has labelled the city council's new air pollution plan [1] "woefully inadequate".

Launched on the 65th anniversary of the "Great Smog of London" which caused the death of approximately 4,000 people, the party says the council needs to be much bolder, ambitious, and optimistic in its plans for reducing air pollution in Leeds. They say the council should be looking to create a "breathing city" where everyone can breathe clean air, enjoy green spaces, and get about by walking, cycling, or public transport.

Around 700 people die prematurely from air pollution in Leeds every year [2]. The Green Party argues that the council's new strategy won't reduce the amount of Particulate Matter (PM) in the air [3], could cause public transport fees to rise rather than fall, and doesn't contain significant targets for improving cycle or walking infrastructure in Leeds.

Chris Bell, Leeds Green Party Policy Officer said:

"The council's plans are only focussed on reducing NOx emissions with no focus on Particulate Matter. There has been no guarantee that bus and train companies will not raise their fares to compensate for the fines they will face for non-compliance, which does not discourage private car usage. These plans do not go far enough to lower the impact of air pollution on the health of Leeds citizens."

Notes

[1] New plan will be available here: <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Pages/Default.aspx>

[2] <https://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk/news/leeds-named-hotspot-for-air-pollution-deaths-as-epidemic-costs-local-nhs-480m-1-7698344>

[3] <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/reports/ageg/pm-summary.pdf>

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